

**Communication from the Point of View of the
Community Services Division**

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Background

The South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice, commonly referred to as “DJJ,” is a state cabinet agency that supports the Governor’s mission by “protecting the public and reclaiming juveniles through prevention, community programs, education, and rehabilitative services in the least restrictive environment.”¹ The agency is made up of four divisions and two support offices with approximately 1,450 full-time employees. The most recent available data shows that in the 2010-2011 fiscal year, DJJ received 18,114 case referrals and supervised 4,293 juveniles in the community².

The Community Services Division, one of the four divisions of DJJ, consists of 43 county offices covering all 46 counties within South Carolina and is responsible for providing a number of services and programs to juveniles and their families. The staff make-up of each office varies due to the size of the population they serve, but each county office offers many of the same services including detention screenings, intake interviews, recommendations for diversion of cases, family court recommendations, referrals for services, and general supervision of juveniles under a court order. Case managers actively work with juveniles and their families from the point of initial contact with the juvenile justice system through the time they complete their term of supervision on either probation or parole. Services are coordinated through collaboration with mental health providers, substance abuse counselors, the family court system, schools, and

¹ Source: <http://www.state.sc.us/djj>

² Source: 2011 South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice Report Card

other various community partners in an effort to give these juveniles the opportunity to become successful and productive citizens of South Carolina.

Problem Statement

In order for the agency to accomplish its mission, constant communication and information sharing must be taking place throughout the agency. Given that DJJ focuses on utilizing the least restrictive environment while working with juveniles, communication is especially important in the Community Services Division as the majority of juveniles involved with the juvenile justice system will be served in the community. The agency has several ways to share information from traditional modes such as telephone calls, letters, and faxes to more modern and technological modes such as email, scanning, and a web-based database known as the Juvenile Justice Management System, or JJMS.

During my time with DJJ, there have been many occasions in which I have heard concerns about breakdowns in communication. These concerns include but are not limited to gaps in appropriate supervision levels due to the length of time it takes to transfer cases to another county, lack of open communication between county offices and evaluation centers, a feeling that upper management is not concerned about the opinions of employees in the community, and poor communication and teamwork within county offices. If information is not shared effectively, the quality of services offered by our agency to juveniles and their families can be greatly diminished. Within DJJ, poor communication could result in a lapse of supervision of juveniles in the community, a delay in obtaining

important services such as mental health counseling or substance abuse counseling, or could cause case managers to duplicate efforts, which takes away from time that would be better spent working directly with juveniles. Additionally, it can lead to a lower morale among employees and increase in operating costs within the agency.

The goal of this project was to assess current methods of communication in an effort to determine effective and efficient means of sharing information so that standard procedures may be implemented in order to improve the quality of services offered by DJJ. It was initially thought that poor communication was an issue within the Community Services Division. This turned out not to be the case, but areas of improvement were revealed.

Data Collection

A survey consisting of 10 questions was sent out to 96 employees within the Community Services Division of DJJ on September 18, 2012 using SurveyMonkey³. The majority of these employees were located in the Midlands Region which is made up of offices that cover rural areas as well as suburban and urban areas in 16 different counties. The employees invited to participate in the survey include administrative assistants, intake case managers, probation and parole case managers, intensive supervision officers, supervisors, and county directors. Of the 96 recipients of this survey, 56 responded.

Questions asked were related to how staff members are using the agency's web-based data system (JJMS) to record information about juveniles to be shared

³ Results to this survey are found in Appendix A

throughout the agency as needed, how referrals are made to service providers, and how information is sent to evaluation centers. The employees were also asked to rate the ease of communication on various levels within the agency such as within county offices, between county offices, between county offices and evaluation centers, between county offices and their regional office, and between the community and state office. They were asked to indicate areas of success as well as areas that they feel need improvement related to communication within the agency. Employees were given the opportunity to add comments after each question.

Data Analysis

In reviewing the responses given in the survey, it appears that the quality of communication at DJJ is generally perceived in a positive light and the majority of employees are satisfied with how communication is carried out within the agency. 66.1% of respondents were either “Satisfied” or “Very Satisfied” with communication within the agency and only one respondent (representing 1.8%) gave a negative rating on this topic. 78.6% of these employees feel that communication within DJJ is sufficient enough for its employees to effectively serve the citizens of South Carolina.

Respondents indicated that they are utilizing many methods of communication available to them (such as email, fax, telephone, video conference, etc.) on a fairly consistent basis. Employees specifically commented that scanning, emailing, and video conferencing are positive aspects of communication

within the agency. JJMS is being utilized the vast majority of the time to record demographic and historical information about clients collected from the Client Assessment and Evaluation. This tool is viewed by some respondents as a “vital tool”⁴ and is relied upon throughout the agency as a central location for information pertaining to juveniles involved with DJJ. Only 83.9% indicated that they are “Always” uploading court orders related to a juvenile’s involvement with Family Court. It was indicated that information is entered into JJMS, but that it is not updated regularly.

Several methods are being used when making referrals to service providers such as the Department of Mental Health and the Department of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services. Scanning and then emailing a referral form, faxing a referral form, or simply calling the service providers to set up services are taking place frequently. Employees in the Community Service Division, however, are also taking advantage of being able to make referrals via an automated system that is used when juveniles and their families agree to complete the Global Appraisal of Individual Needs Short Screener, also known as the GAIN-SS. If a need for mental health or substance abuse counseling is identified in the screening, a referral for these services can automatically be made through the electronic system. This shows that the employees in the division are able to adapt and utilize various methods of communication.

Transfer and evaluation packets are sent to counties to which a juvenile may be relocating and to evaluation centers when a juvenile is court-ordered for a residential evaluation. These packets contain large amounts of pertinent

⁴ Appendix A, Responses to Question 8

information regarding a juvenile including but not limited to their family makeup and history, education information, health history, and substance abuse history. The survey asked respondents to indicate how they send these packets, which can contain numerous pages, to evaluation centers and the DJJ office of the receiving county. Respondents were able to choose more than one option as it is improbable that one method will always work. The majority indicated that they scan and email this information while 29.6% indicated that they utilize the US Postal Service. It was indicated that email capabilities for some employees in the community limits the file size of documents that can be sent. This prevents larger packets from being sent, and causes staff to have to mail this information via the US Postal Service. This method can often times take several days to get from one point to another and often costs several dollars per packet to send.

Employees in the Community Services Division appear to be comfortable with the ease of communication within their perspective offices, between county offices, and between their county office and regional office. Some respondents did indicate that there is some tension within their respective offices and that “personality clashes”⁵ can cause disruptions in communication. There appear to be some areas of concern related to the ease of communication between the county offices and evaluation centers as well as between the county offices and the state office as 21.4% of respondents rated communication with evaluation centers as “Somewhat Difficult” and 18.9% of respondents felt that communication between the county offices and the state office was either “Very Difficult” or “Somewhat Difficult.”

⁵ Appendix A, Responses to Question 6

Evaluation Centers provide residential court-ordered evaluations for adjudicated juveniles prior to final disposition of their cases. These facilities provide comprehensive psychological, social, and educational assessments to assist the court in making appropriate decisions regarding disposition of these cases. An appropriate level of quality communication between the county office (which works directly with the juveniles and their families throughout their involvement with the juvenile justice system) and the evaluation center (which administers and analyzes previously mentioned assessments) is of the utmost importance in effectively determining the best recommendations to be made to the court during final disposition of a case. Alone, information from the county office and the evaluation centers are helpful when working with clients; however, using this information in a synergistic fashion helps to optimize services provided in order to make appropriate referrals for services and provide the necessary level of supervision to improve the chances of success for clients served. One respondent suggested that not knowing the staff at evaluation centers may contribute to the difficulty in communicating with them.

In regards to communication with the state office, employees are encouraged to utilize their chain of command to address any concerns that can be addressed at lower levels. From the comments that respondents gave, it appears that they feel that there is a “disconnect” between the state and local levels of the agency. Specifically mentioned was that the state level may make commitments to projects or initiatives without taking into consideration the number of responsibilities and programs for which employees in the local offices are already

responsible. The concern with this is that if employees feel as if they are not being heard, levels of morale decrease which has a negative impact on the quality of work produced.

Conclusions and Recommendations

In regards to JJMS and regular updates being made to juvenile information and uploaded court orders, the agency has already taken a step towards improvement by creating the position of "Quality Assurance Specialist." Part of the responsibilities of this position is to review reports from JJMS to ensure that certain points of information (such as court dispositions and uploaded court orders) are being updated appropriately. Unfortunately, these reports do not show if information such as addresses, phone numbers, health history, and involvement with other agencies is truly up to date. It is recommended that the County Directors and/or other direct supervisors of case managers be charged with performing random file checks at regular intervals. Per DJJ Policy F-8.1, entitled *Community-Based Supervision of Juveniles*, case managers "will staff all active supervision cases with a supervisor on at least a quarterly basis." If possible, this policy could be modified to include that supervisors review information in the file to ensure that it matches information on JJMS.

It is understood that some service providers in the community require that referrals and other information be sent in their preferred methods and that county offices do everything they can to work with these providers. When sending transfer and evaluation packets to other county offices and facilities, there appears to be

no set “preferred” method.. A juvenile in the community may have limited supervision during the time that the receiving county awaits a transfer packet, so quick and efficient transfer methods are extremely important. If packets are sent in a more expeditious method, appropriate levels of supervision may resume which could reduce the chances of that juvenile re-offending. Also, utilizing quicker methods of file transfers, such as scanning and emailing, can reduce the amount of money the agency spends mailing large packets of information. It is recommended that a standard method of sending these packets be developed and implemented in a set of pilot counties to determine the necessity and feasibility of a statewide implementation.

At least two pilot counties should be chosen in each of the 3 DJJ regions in order to be able to analyze the effectiveness of chosen communication methods between county offices and each of the three evaluation centers. A time frame of 6 months should be utilized to track information related to the transfer of packets via methods currently used. This time frame should be sufficient to obtain a snapshot of the transfer of information, will allow the opportunity for multiple court dates in each county, and will provide ample time to increase the probability of some clients relocating to other counties. Following the initial 6 month period, an additional 6 months using a chosen standard method of transferring information packets should take place.

Given that the DJJ county offices have the equipment to do so, scanning and emailing should be the primary mode of transferring information as it is much faster and less costly than utilizing the US Postal Service. Special considerations

may be made to utilize postal services in the case of equipment failure. DJJ's Office of Information Technology will need to be contacted to modify file size limits that prevents larger documents from being sent by this method. Additionally, the Office of Technology will need to be contacted to see if data encryption is in place to ensure the safe transmittal of private information related to the juveniles that the agency serves. If not currently in place, data encryption may need to be considered.

Prior to implementation, staff from the chosen counties should be trained regarding what will be expected during the pilot project. It is advised that employees be trained on how to scan documents and how to utilize email to send them. Employees should be shown how they can view details about sent emails to determine if and when a message has been opened. Once they can do this, they should be provided a form to keep track of the date and time when packets are sent, the date and time when packets are received, the facility or county to which the packet was sent, the employee that received the packet, method of transfer, and cost (should one be incurred) at the time of transmission. During both 6 month periods, all sent packets should be tracked, including those that have to be sent via fax, US Postal Service, or hand delivery due to extenuating circumstances. A sample tracking form can be found in Appendix B.

At the end of the pilot project, data will need to be collected from tracking forms completed in each of the pilot counties. Data from the first 6 months can be compared to the second 6 months in order to see if the set method of scanning and emailing information turns out to be quicker and less costly than current

methods. If costs decrease and transfer times decrease, then a statewide implementation of a standard method of sending this important information may need to be considered.

In an effort for staff to feel more involved with and more accepting of decisions being made within the agency and, more specifically, within the Community Services Division, it should be considered that both general and topical surveys be utilized more frequently within the division. Though upper management is open to direct communication with any employee in the agency, which is made evident through Director Margaret Barber's annual "Fireside Chats" with various offices, many staff are reluctant to express their concerns or opinions in such a direct manner. It is felt that quarterly or semi-annual surveys will allow employees to give honest feedback without the fear of retribution, will improve "buy-in" from employees, and also improve morale by making employees feel more involved in the important happenings in the agency. This can easily be implemented through surveys being sent out from the deputy director or the director's office. Assistance from the Office of Planning and Programs - Research and Statistics Section may possibly be available to assist with this if it is necessary.

In the responses to the survey issued for this project, comments were made about tension within local offices and lack of trust between local offices and evaluation centers. It is recommended that opportunities for team building be given on a regular basis. Frequent reminders of the availability of resources such as the ropes course at the Broad River Road Campus should be sent out to the

community offices and County Directors should be encouraged to utilize these resources as well as develop their own team building exercises. If possible, Staff Development and Training should assist in ensuring that the team building exercises are appropriate.

Though time and resources are limited, it is important for employees to learn that they can trust each other and learn to work together. It is recommended that an annual or semi-annual meeting between community and evaluation staff be arranged in which team building exercises are done and working relationships can be improved upon. This would also be an excellent time to discuss any substantive issues and ideas of how to improve the processes and collaboration between the community and the evaluation centers.

In conclusion, it appears that communication as it relates to the Community Services Division of the South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice is sufficient and that information is being shared in a manner that allows employees to perform their jobs in an appropriate manner. The data that was collected for this project suggests that employees in the community are generally satisfied with the methods and effectiveness of communication that is available to them. There does appear, however, to be areas where improvement could possibly take place. Though there are many other areas not covered in this project that could be addressed, it is believed that the recommendations found here could be an excellent starting point for improvements in the quality of communication the Community Services Division and the agency.

References

- SCDJJ Website – <http://www.state.sc.us/djj>
- 2011 South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice Report Card
- www.surveymonkey.com
- South Carolina Department of Juvenile Justice Policy F-8.1, *Community-Based Supervision of Juveniles*

Appendix A

Survey Responses

Communication and Information-sharing Within the SCDJJ Community Services Division

Response Summary

**Total Started Survey: 56
Total Finished Survey: 56 (100%)**

1. Is Client Assessment and Evaluation (CAE) information ALWAYS entered into JJMS within your county? This includes demographics, juvenile history, and special needs.

Yes	54	96.4%
No	2	3.6%

If not, please describe what information (if any) is entered. 2 Responses

- “the majority is entered, but often not updated promptly”
- “sometimes its entered but there are so many glitches in JJMS that it kicks info out.”

2. How often are court orders (excluding continuances) uploaded to JJMS in your county?

Always	47	83.9%
Often	8	14.3%
Rarely	1	1.8%
Never	0	0.0%

If you answered no, please explain why. 2 Responses

- “For my juveniles all orders are uploaded. If the clocked order has been received at the time of assignment to my caseload then intake uploads the order; however, if the clocked order is not received until after case assignment to me then I upload the order myself. Intake does a very good job of uploading all orders received by them, but I do not know if other POs upload orders if intake does not.”
- “Not all case workers are doing this. Observed when case is transferred from one CM to another.”

3. How do you most commonly make referrals to service providers (i.e. DMH, DAODAS, etc.)?

Telephone the provider	11	19.6%
Fax a referral form to the provider	16	28.6%
Scan & E-mail a referral form to the provider	15	26.8%
E-mail a message to the provider indicating the need for a referral	1	1.8%
Other	13	23.2%

Is your method effective? (i.e. Is there quick response from providers? Do you often have to resend referrals?)

34 Responses

- "Yes"
- "All of the mentioned methods are used. Most frequently a telephone call by the case manager precedes or follows the faxed referral form to the provider. Some referrals are made through email by GAINS."
- "Yes our method is effective. There is a quick response from the providers. There are rare occasions where we have to resend a referral."
- "We usually make a call and follow up with the written referral"
- "Quick response, a few resends"
- "This is a very effective method and the response is not immediate but in a timely manner. There are times when a provider has informed that they have not received the referral so a second one is resend."
- "yes, calling is most effective"
- "yes"
- "We also use GAIN, when guardian agrees to participate. Telephoning the provider is effective."
- "Our office hand delivers all referrals"
- "Yes, they do respond quickly."
- "Scan/Email to DMH, Fax to DAODAS, Scan/E-mail to most other providers"
- "Referrals are hand delivered. There is a quick response."
- "Referrals to DMH is always completed via telephone while the family is still in the office upon completion of intake. Scheduling an appointment this way could 15 minutes as you have to speak to two separate people before an appointment can be scheduled. Referrals to Alcohol and Drug are completed via fax AND through GAIN-SS each time. We do have to resend referrals via fax many times."

- "Yes"
- "Hand-deliver a referral from to the provider. Not often"
- "yes, you can verify they received referrals."
- "Sometimes I have to call the provider as well to do a referral"
- "no quick response, so i follow up with a fax of the referral form"
- "It is effective as far as sending, but maybe not in responses back."
- "Staff also do a follow-up telephone call to provider. We rarely have to send referrals."
- "Method is effective through the G.A.I.N.-SS assessment. Response is usually rapid."
- "very effective, rarely have to resend"
- "We generally phone to make referrals how ever some referrals are made at our monthly interagency staffing. We have used some of the other means to make referrals as well."
- "Effective: Yes and resend No"
- "thru GAIN"
- "I do not have to send referrals to service providers except for Arbitration and those referrals are taken directly to the Arbitration office on the day of court. I very seldom have to resend these referrals."
- "Case workers do this, I am not a case worker so I am not sure."
- "I have used "All of the Above" to make a referral to service providers. Responses are exceptionally slow. I, usually, have to contact the provider, again, to confirm that they received the referral and are following up on the referral."
- "The referrals are hand delivered and signed for by the service providers."
- "The response time depends on the service provider. Most are timely. Referrals often have to be resent."
- "Yes, we have a good relationship with our local providers. We call then first and for some agencies we have to fax the referral form also."
- "Fax and scan/email most useful, although fax is most popular. On occasion DAODAS fax lines are busy and have to resend."
- "Yes"

4. How does your county most often send transfer/evaluation packets to other counties/evaluation centers?

Fax	8	14.8%
US Postal Service	16	29.6%
Scan/E-mail	39	72.7%
Deliver in person	2	3.7%
Skipped Question	2	
<i>Other (please specify)</i>	7 Responses	

- "Also scan and when other methods fail and it becomes necessary, they are Faxed"
- "Our Biz Hub in Sumter is having problems scanning. We have been splitting time with the mail and fax depending on the size of the packet."
- "evaluation packets are sent on day of commitment by law enforcement. transfer packets are usually sent by mail"
- "I believe that some are faxed as well."
- "Scan/email in Barnwell because our fax machine only allows you to fax a limited amount of pages, I always have to make copies and send it in the mail or wait until "I get to Barnwell to scan/email the packet"
- "This is a two part question. We scan/email packets to Eval Centers but we mail transfer packets to counties."
- "I don't know, because that's done in intake."

5. If a juvenile receives a charge in your county but is already under supervision in a different county, do you notify that county of the new charge?

Yes	48	85.7%
No	8	14.3%

Comments: 8 Responses

- "Not always done, but we work to the goal"
- "usually just a quick email"
- "So far the other county has always become aware of the charge prior to me knowing so they have contacted me."

- “Yes also to retrieve any background information on client. If case is going to court it also helps to staff recommendations with that county to see what services are available.”
- “We count on JJMS, Form 5's for the information.”
- “We notify & asked for recommendations. If suitable we may transfer the disposition to that county.”
- “I generally look their caseworker up on our email and notify them by email of the new charges.”
- “No, I don't in my capacity, but the case workers might do this.”

6. How would you rate the ease (openness) of communication in the following areas:

	Very Difficult	Somewhat Difficult	Neither Difficult Nor Easy	Somewhat Easy	Very Easy	Response Count
Within County Office (between co-workers and between the employees/supervisor(s))	1 (1.8%)	4 (7.1%)	5 (8.9%)	15 (26.8%)	31 (55.4%)	56
Between County Offices (regarding case transfers, mutual clients, etc.)	0 (0.0%)	4 (7.1%)	7 (12.5%)	30 (53.6%)	15 (26.8%)	56
Between the County Office and Evaluation Centers (regarding recommendations, history, etc.)	0 (0.0%)	12 (21.4%)	8 (14.3%)	24 (42.9%)	12 (21.4%)	56
Between the County Office and its respective Regional Office	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.8%)	8 (14.5%)	15 (27.3%)	31 (56.4%)	55
Between the Community and the State Office	2 (3.8%)	8 (15.1%)	16 (30.2%)	19 (35.8%)	8 (15.1%)	53

Please elaborate on why you chose these responses

32 Responses

- “Communication is very important, so I make every effort to use e-mail as a good way to show that I respond to any and all questions.”
- “I chose these responses based on past experiences. I have an open door policy when it comes to communicating with staff as well as my immediate supervisor and others in management.”
- “Communication with the County Offices is pretty good and friendly but sometimes when someone is new to their position, you have to learn to be more patient. When question arises you can't just push them off on someone else by saying you're too busy or ect. We all are professionals

and have to work together, so having good communication is very vital in order to perform our daily tasks to achieve our goals. We have to always keep in mind that the children of DJJ is the reason why we're here....to help them."

- "Communication is very easy in the county office because of the comfort level within and the personalities in the office. Between counties, regional, or state offices it would not be neither difficult nor easy because of the communication we have with either on a day to day basis."
- "In office communication and communication up the direct chain is good. We are often at odds with the E Centers over recommendations."
- "Overall communication is good but due to individual schedules and workload it can sometime take time to get in contact with that person."
- "Some county offices are easier to work with than others. Eval. Centers can be inconsistent. No issues with Regional office....excellent response with RA."
- "We have not encountered any problems with this type of communication. With the eval center, on some occasions there is a delay, due to trying to catch up with the social worker."
- "I have an open communication with everyone. Just out spoken."
- "Majority of the time employees who have voice mail are hard to reach or their mail box is always full and you cannot leave a message."
- "Communication in our county office is very easy because supervisors have an open door policy. Anytime a case has been transferred from a different court information that is need is always easy to obtain. Communication between county office and an evaluation center is easy obtain as well."
- "In the particular county I work in I feel comfortable approaching my supervisors and director; however, I have worked in another county that this was not at all the case. I do not work in intake so I do not receive case transfers until after it has been assigned to me. In the past I have had to case transfers and sometimes have run into there being delays in the next county accepting the case. Again, I do not do intake, but in my experience I have been able to contact the evaluation centers and provide input; however, I have worked in another county and received evaluations documenting that the social worker had contacted me, which in many cases was not the truth. In this county I have had no difficulties being able to contact the Regional Office when necessary; however, in the previous county, which had a different Regional Office, case managers were not allowed to contact the Regional Office or Columbia directly or without prior approval from the supervisor or director. From the county level I don't think many things that are being done on the state level are communicated to us. Often I feel like our policy or procedures are changing without an explanation as to why the changes and the logic behind it."
- "I do not handle case transfers. All mutual cases between counties involved the juvenile being close to getting off of probation in the other

county once the case here began so there hasn't been the need for a lot of communication. I find it easy to communicate with the Evaluation Centers but most communication regarding recommendation agreement/disagreement is handled by supervisors. We have no issues with communication with our regional office that I know of."

- "I think communication in office is overall good but sometimes there are personality clashes over little things between workers. Sometimes office can be territorial about information that we are all suppose to be sharing Can debate options and come to a consensus Excellent relationships Keep us well informed and will respond to questions in a timely manner"
- "using communication between community and state office is frowned upon.....we are skipping the regional step"
- "I work in a very hostile environment where communication often misses its mark...moral is low; the director does nothing more than shot out emails to keep us informed; supervisors only share information with those apart of the "wolf pack" and if you are not apart of it then information is often rec'd much later or pass deadlines. On the note of the email shooting director when positions open she often fails to mention that to staff that have served this agency for years and hands the openings out to "people off the street that she fancies". Even when the hiring is done in-house it is often given to those of "preference""
- "All Staff at many times work together to get the job/problem/issue resolved. Email/Scan has helped greatly in info sharing between counties, co-workers and supervisors"
- "I have not had any problems when it comes to contact the county director or supervisor or staff when two counties djv office are involved in a case or case transfer. Everyone always seem helpful."
- "This has been my experience"
- "between the community and the state office, somewhat difficult because you have to go through the automated system to reach someone, and when i do, i normally get a voice mail."
- "I think anything within the agency being transferred is a easy process. It becomes maybe a little more challenging when working with outside agencies."
- "I responded the way I did because my supervisor, coworkers and I have a great working relationship. My supervisor has an open door policy and he's always willing to listen and assist. As for my coworker, we always try to work as a team regardless of one's position. We always try to have each other's back. Everyday isn't easy but there's nothing that we can't work through. When the Evaluation Centers call we try to assist them with their needs. I will honestly say, if there's anything that anyone (County, Community, and State Offices) need we try to accommodate them. And if there's any uncertainty on staff behalf, all we have to do is ask our Supervisor."

- "I am not in the capacity where contact may be as such, when having to make contact with certain aspects of the department as the last two questions without a supervisor giving permission."
- "open communication is throughout the agency. Everyone usually responds quickly."
- "There is a disconnect or lack of trust from local to the state level."
- "I think State Office has lost touch with reality and often commits to projects, joint endeavors, etc with out truly considering what the community is already responsible for, ie GAINS, Medicaid, ECC, Restoring Carolina, Victims Classes, Family Solutions, Adopt a class, GREAT and on and on."
- "Most of the time, it is easy to either walk to someone's office to speak with them or to pick up the phone and call a different agency. Generally, staff are good at returning your phone call and/or email and/or fax."
- "There is just tension in our office, wish it wasn't like that."
- "Overall we have a good communication system within DJJ."
- "THEIR IS OFTEN A LOT OF TENSION IN OUR OFFICE WITH PEOPLE NOT BEING A TEAM PLAYER."
- "Never had to communicate with State Office. Always easy to communicate with other via phone or email. Quick responses when email."
- "Communication is relatively easy out in the counties, but seem to bog down with secure centers mainly because of not personally knowing the secure center's staff as well, and there may be some mis-trust involved."

7. Overall, do you feel that communication within SCDJJ is sufficient to allow its employees to effectively serve the citizens of South Carolina? (i.e. Does information come to you from your supervisor(s) in a timely manner? Do county offices transfer cases in a timely manner? Is there an appropriate amount of dialogue between evaluation staff and county case managers?)

Yes	44	78.6%
No	8	14.3%
Unsure	4	7.1%

Please explain your answer. 24 Responses

- "The same answer as # 6."
- "Sometimes cases could be transferred in a more timely manner as well as ensuring paperwork is included in the packet."
- "In my opinion improvement needs to be made between in communication between evaluation staff and county case managers."
- "Yes, communication has been better in allowing employees to serve our citizens better in South Carolina. There is an appropriate amount of

dialogue between the evaluation staff and the county case managers to my knowledge.”

- “There have been no problems in this area.”
- “Supervisor has a staff meeting the following Monday after the manager's meeting. Transfer cases have been received in a timely. Have never had a problem with evaluation staff.”
- “Anytime any changes take place our county director and supervisor lets us know immediately of any changes whether is via email or during a meeting.”
- “I feel that our supervisors provide us with information when it is provided to them; however, often it does not seem that they understand the reasons for certain things anymore than we (case managers) do. I cannot speak as to whether transfer cases are received in a timely manner, as they go to intake prior to me. When I have had kids at evaluation centers (depending on which one) I feel that dialogue was sufficient, but I have had limited experience with this as I do probation.”
- “Information from the County Director always arrives in a timely manner. The County Director is upfront and open with information in our staff meetings. Transfer of cases is always completed in a timely manner here.”
- “Transfer are sent and sometimes you have to remind supervisors that the cases need to be accepted and assigned. Although there are some office that are quick to see that it is done. There is dialog between evaluation and community and as long as BOTH keep an open mind and listen to opinions a compromise can usually be reached if there is a difference of opinions in the beginning.”
- “Regarding eval's I can express upon certain evaluation staff my thoughts after meeting and interacting with a minor and when I get the report back the recommendations are often not best suited for that minor's needs.....also, due to risk score communication with my supervisor is often ineffective due to having to follow a very lackluster system in determining a need for a "human" I have seen cases of DUI and the risk score says probation or divert and often times trying to convince my supervisor that something more is needed falls on deaf ears due to "policy". So in all communication is often a MAJOR disservice to the citizens in that we are creating "super criminals" with everything from ECC to risk scores...JMO”
- “We sometime have trouble with the Clerk's file. But transfer documents seems to get to us in a timely manner and other etc.”
- “Sometimes within the office information is given or received in a timely manner. However, I think there is a breakdown of information being transferred between probations and Intake.”
- “Supervisor forwards information from his Supervisor as well as others, as soon as he receives it. So far transferring of cases are done upon notification that juvenile has transferred. I've seen emails as well as telephone calls done to ensure transfer of cases.”

- "In this office, there seems to be an understanding that the need to ensure that cases are being managed and worked in a way to make sure that any transition in place holds all accountable for communication with staff of the evaluation center(s) or transferring cases in a timely fashion."
- "I haven't had a problem with communication between supervisors."
- "For the most part that true but there is always some who don't."
- "It takes a week or more for a county to county transfer; when you know it was scanned and emailed and should show acceptance on JJMS the next day."
- "Our county director is very good at communicating with the staff in the office, whether it be through meetings or email. Cases are transferred relatively quickly."
- "We have monthly staff meetings to discuss what was brought to attention in managers' meeting. There have been numerous times where employees have not received updated information in order to perform our job duties. The employees in this county office have had to reach out to other county offices to learn of the new information - even after a staff meeting is held."
- "COUNTY DIRECTOR COMMUNICATES QUICKLY AND EFFECTIVELY. EVALUATION STAFF DO CONTACT OUR OFFICE IN A TIMELY MANNER. SOMETIMES TRANSFER CASES ARE INSUFFICIENT AS FAR AS ALL PAPERWORK BEING IN FILE."
- "Communication is good."
- "Contact between supervisor and staff is good. Difficulty at times with communications and receiving notices of transferred juveniles."
- "Overall communications are passed along within a short time period, but there are some communication issues between county staff and evaluation centers"

8. In what ways are communication/information-sharing working well within SCDJJ?

45 Responses

11 Did Not Respond

- "You have to communicate in order to be effective at your job."
- "email and telephone use"
- "The job is getting done quicker. Everyone is informed and knowledgeable of what is going on."
- "N/A"
- "County Offices work well together in the community in sharing state cars, car pooling for training events."
- "Emailing, Scanning and Telephone"

- "Inner agency communication seems to take a priority over interagency communication"
- "Email, training, and meetings...."
- "Email is the best form of communication within the agency"
- "emails and video conference are helpful"
- "email makes community easier and more timely"
- "E-Mail"
- "In this county, it works well in all areas."
- "Emails/telephone conversation."
- "Weekly staffings"
- "Email"
- "I feel with JJMS training being available to all staff has improved understanding between county and evaluation staff."
- "email, staff meeting, by telephone, in person, us postal"
- "Communication works well in this particular office, but the previous county was not so well."
- "The more communication the better we serve our youth."
- "scanning has improved sharing"
- "email/scan"
- "Getting reports via email and having the ability to forward to PD's and Asst. Sol."
- "email/scan is great tool to quickly get info in & out"
- "Scanning, and email is a helpful tool."
- "I believe the community offices communicate well with one another. Being able to scan documents and send via email has help the process a great deal."
- "between community offices"
- "In office communication and also emails."
- "JJMS is a vital tool in having access to the juvenile's history and demographics throughout the state. Email and scanning are excellent resources in sharing information"
- "Emails"
- "E-mail system, scanning and e-mailing information"
- "email is very effective. I appreciate the openness between staff and counties"
- "Information is distributed frequently via email."
- "Scan\email"
- "Saving postage, instant feedback on questions, not waiting on phone call to be returned."
- "Most of the staff at DJJ communicate well with others, mostly through email and phone calls."

- "Not sure."
- "Emails between SCDJJ personnel have proven to be effective and quick ways to communicate with one another. This, also, provides a paperwork trail for employees."
- "Email and telephone"
- "Effective communication seems to depend on the level of rapport you have with a person or office. I find it is always good to know the Admin Assistant in an office in order to facilitate that messages are given to the right person."
- "We have a good communication system in my county with almost everyone throughout DJJ. Our supervisor is awesome."
- "EMAILS, DIRECTOR"
- "Phone, Fax, Scan/Email"
- "emails"
- "Inter-office, and between counties"

9. In what ways could communication/information-sharing improve within SCDJJ?

42 Responses

14 Did Not Respond

- "Continue to use your e-mail as proof that you are communicating effectively."
- "person to person or direct"
- "To not just assume that everyone knows everything. To always be open to questions and opinions."
- "N/A"
- "I have learned that local donors from my county have contributed to DJJ and I would like to be able to recognize them with a thank you note but was unaware until I accidentally came across the information."
- "Everyone having access to scanning material."
- "I think there is still a disconnect between the Community and Institutional divisions although there has been great improvement in recent years"
- "A social type of network, i.e. facebook or twitter for the agency"
- "Management should not disclose information to co-workers before announcing it to the whole group."
- "Everyone should have their own voicemail so that if someone calls that individual they can leave a detailed message instead of giving it to the Administrative Specialist."

- "video conference could be used more often, esp. for short trainings. Too many times we have to travel to Cola. for a two hour training that could have been done via video or info. could be emailed"
- "don't know"
- "More interaction"
- "Again, no problems"
- "N/A"
- "Allow more interaction of staff with other areas."
- "Voice mail should never be full and a secretary should be available to take a message when staff is away from their phone."
- "I would appreciate more inclusion and information from the state when things are changing and why they are changing, possibly being informed about research that is being done that is guiding the agency in our approach to juveniles."
- "Electronic file would be best for attached records."
- "n/a"
- "Actually utilize the IM system; switch to a paperless systems; my director often instead of walking down to share important with her staff she will stay in her office and send an email...i feel if moral is high in an office happier workers lead to better production in any situation..."
- "passing on of information already sent to one location"
- "Responding to email and returning phone calls in a timely manner would be helpful."
- "The communication from the Eval Centers and BRRC is a bit problematic. Simple things like returning phone calls would help. Sharing treatment plans and notifying the community in a timely manner."
- "more integrated training to forge relationships between divisions"
- "More dialogue within the office may be great."
- "Institution and community could work on communicating more effectively either by phone or email."
- "I'm not certain if there's a need for improving communication/information sharing. Emails seem to be effective and my supervisor ALWAYS have monthly meeting with staff to share information forwarded to him."
- "Monthly updates from the regional offices via the televisions in the offices"
- "n/a"
- "When there is truth, consistency behind the information shared from state level to the local level. Such as communicating tight budget, hiring freeze but sending emails to welcome hires at the state level."
- "n/a"
- "Some staff in the office keep to themselves and do not let others know what is going on with their cases, this could be improved by better communication throughout the office."
- "Not sure."

- “Being able to scan and email evaluation packets to eval centers, no matter the GB size, would be beneficial. The information would travel quicker, and be cost efficient.”
- “Better email system”
- “Common courtesy. Return calls and respond to emails in a timely manner. Treat others as you would like to be treated.”
- “We would like to receive a special notification if our kid is moved from one placement to another. Monthly updates on juveniles behind the fence via email would be great. It would also be nice to get discharge summaries for kids released from BRRC to include any certificates they received and transcripts. Other than that communication itself is great.”
- “SHOULD BE MORE TEAM WORK WITHIN THE COMMUNITY WORKERS”
- “They are good”
- “hold workers accountable”
- “Between county offices and evaluation centers”

10. Overall, how satisfied are you with communications within SCDJJ?

Very Satisfied	9	16.1%
Satisfied	28	50.0%
Neutral	18	32.1%
Dissatisfied	1	1.8%
Very Dissatisfied	0	0.0%

Appendix B

Sample Tracking Form for Pilot Project

SAMPLE

Facility/Office: _____

[illegible]